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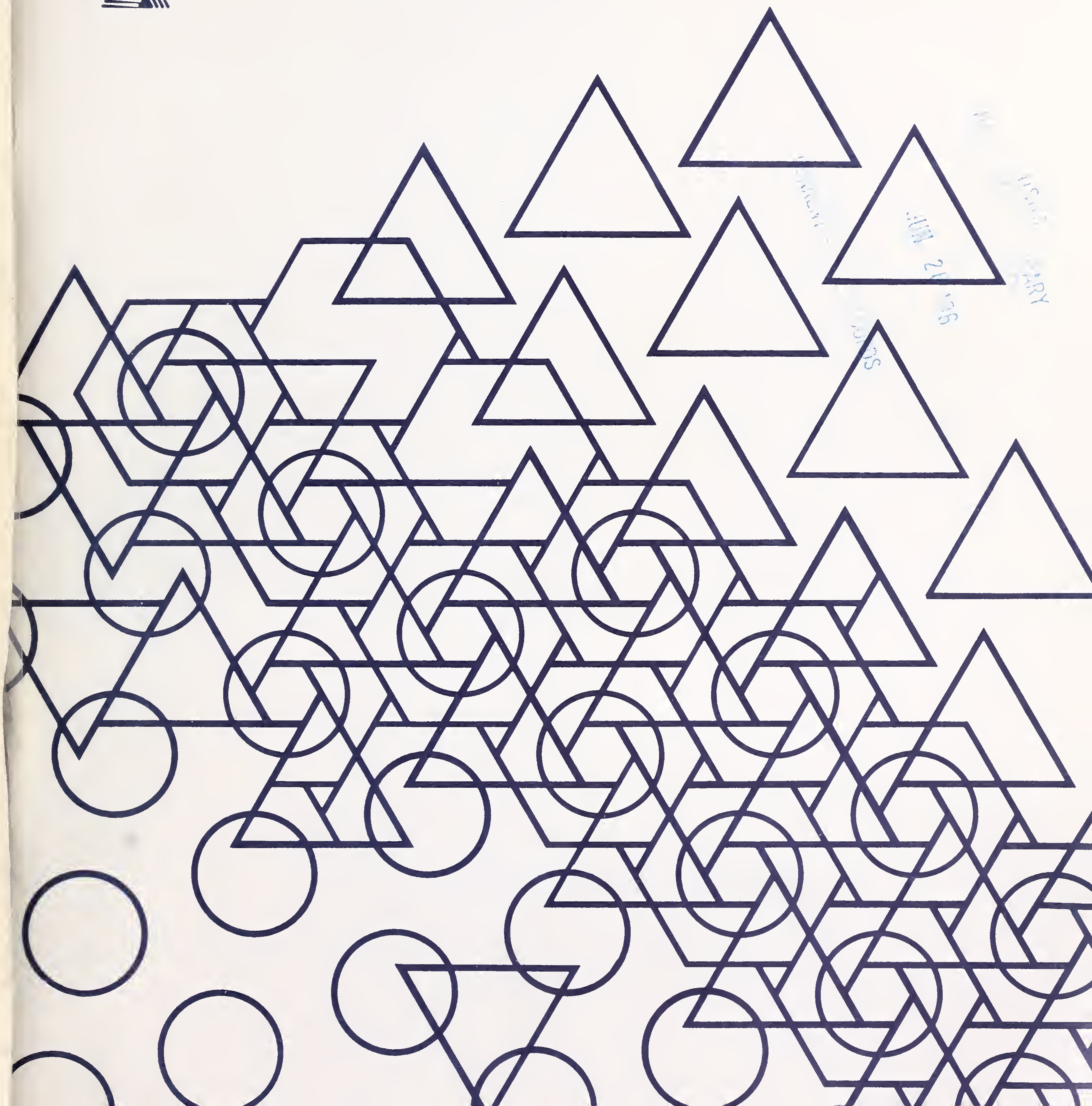
Using Paraprofessionals To Deliver Educational Programs



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Using Paraprofessionals To Deliver Educational Programs

This handbook is designed to assist individuals and organizations working with paraprofessionals in educational programming.

The processes and concepts described in this handbook acknowledge the success of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program as well as the contributions of many individuals: the home economists who have initiated and tested the concepts, the paraprofessionals who have demonstrated their effectiveness, and administrators and nutritionists who have given leadership and support.

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Contents

Introduction

The value of paraprofessionals has been conclusively proven in the last 20 years. The use of paraprofessionals has been an important solution to a growing demand for more personalized delivery by human-service agencies. (See appendix 2.)

The introduction of the paraprofessional position served two purposes. The first was to rapidly expand a specific function of an organization. The second was to provide jobs and career opportunities for unemployed or underemployed individuals. In more recent years, staffing with paraprofessionals has been considered a matter of cost-effectiveness.

The paraprofessional position can be established and implemented in most professions or programs. This publication concerns paraprofessionals in educational programs for low-income audiences.

Planning the Program

Establishing the Paraprofessional Position

The nature of the program and the characteristics of the community will determine whether paraprofessionals can be used and what qualities and attributes they need. Paraprofessionals recruited from the target audience are vital to the success of educational programs for low-income people because they have experienced most of the problems that low-income families face and they have developed special skills in coping with and solving those problems. (See appendix 1.)

An Extension paraprofessional (often called a program aide) is an individual employed to assist or expand the efforts of professionals. However, a professional supervises the aides' direct contact with the clientele and their conduct of an education program. Most often the aide is indigenous to the target audience. This position is usually restricted to individuals who do not have a baccalaureate degree.

Assessing Needs

How should a program get started? The first step is to assess the needs of an audience and establish the need for a program. This kind of inquiry itself should create a positive response among the intended participants and it should become a recurring activity after the program is implemented. The concept of working *with* the audience rather than merely *for* the audience is particularly necessary when changes in attitudes and behavior are central to the success of the program.

To establish a sound program, the planner should:
1) respond to needs of the audience;
2) involve the intended audience early in planning and decisionmaking;
3) make the program opportunity understandable to the intended audience by relating it to their experience;
4) motivate the audience to want to participate, and provide them with experiences that deal with their problems and help them fulfill their needs.

Defining the problem or the need includes both compiling existing information and gathering new information from the audience, the neighborhood, and the community. A needs assessment survey and statistical information on the economic status of a geographic area should provide answers to basic questions. It is necessary not only to identify a situation that will point out the need for such a program, but also to build support for the program's objectives.

Community endorsement of a program is often the key to success and a necessary factor for obtaining future funding. There is no study that describes the dynamics of support within a community. It is likely, however, that the leadership hierarchy will need to participate in various ways for a program to succeed. (See appendix 2.)

The importance of a needs assessment is its value for program planning. Appendix 3, "Needs Assessment Guide," can help to identify the need for a nutrition program. A similar needs assessment tool could be developed for other subject-matter areas. (See appendix 2.)

Identifying Community Characteristics

The program planner needs to know how the community's characteristics reflect the target clientele. Is the low-income clientele rural or urbanized? Is public transportation readily available? What is the potential for recruiting local volunteers to work with the program? What existing programs operate in the communities? On what is their support based? What are their objectives? What similarities are there, if any? The "Needs Assessment Guide," appendix 3, can help to establish characteristics of the community.

Understanding the Resources

Understanding the available resources will keep program aims realistic and may determine the scope of the commitment and the goals.

Budget

How large is your budget? Be sure to allow for inflation. Are your funds allocated for a particular purpose? Are there specific categories for which they must be spent, such as personnel, travel, supplies?

Where does the funding come from—federal, state, or county government, industrial or private sponsor, and so forth. How can the resources of the community be brought to bear on the program? What are the contributions of the person or office controlling the funds, in-kind staff, space, and equipment? What is the procedure for obtaining funds for the next year?

Time

Are long-range and short-range objectives identified? Must objectives be accomplished in a specific time? If paraprofessionals are employed, will their working hours be flexible or will they be restricted to daytime hours and weekdays? What is considered a workweek—35, 38, or 40 hours? Is a supervisor available at all times?

Staff Capabilities

Will the project be a pilot study and will temporary staff be employed? Can present staff handle the training and supervision of the program? Will new staff be employed at the program site and/or at the regional or state administrative level? Will new resource persons be needed for some areas of training? Are resource persons available locally? At what cost? Does the existing staff feel comfortable with the prospect of initiating this new program? What in-service training will be needed to increase the knowledge and skills of professionals who work with low-income audiences? Also, what coordination might be necessary with a cooperating agency?

All staff members involved should know who will be responsible for the various tasks necessary to implement and evaluate the program.

Understanding the Audience

Audiences with limited resources may be young families, seniors, youth, or farmers caught in the low-income, low-socioeconomic status. It is too easy to generalize about the characteristics of groups. Steps need to be taken to learn about and understand the needs

of the audience. How the audience might react to a given program or a new experience is important for a planner to know. To find out:

- Talk to other agencies and organizations that have had experience with your audience.
- Obtain a bibliography and other source materials on characteristics of low-income audiences.
- Consult with resource people at the state university, such as home economics and agriculture specialists, youth professionals, and sociologists. Some universities have centers for intercultural studies for program development and research that concentrate on particular population groups.
- Consult with volunteers in the community who may have direct contact with members of the clientele group.

Determining Objectives

As in all program planning, the goals and objectives, as well as the roles and functions, should be clearly identified so that all the essential elements will ultimately fit into a comprehensive program.

Clearly stated objectives will help staff and other program associates to understand and reinforce the objective of the program. It also will help people to recognize when the program is succeeding.

Sometimes it is easier to think of a measurable long-range goal first and then identify a series of short-term objectives. In each objective:

- Identify the audience—quantitatively as well as descriptively.
- State the desired changes in behavior and attitudes (such as increased knowledge and improved practices).

Involving Clientele and Community

Involving people from the community in planning the program (both in its initial stages and as it progresses) helps ensure success. It is not necessary to bring such planning groups into a formal organization, committee, or council. Ad hoc committees may be convened at different times, or a special program development committee may be organized. Both kinds of committees should know the objectives of the program and what is expected from them as members.

A program development committee may function at different levels—community, area, county, and state. Clientele representatives (low-income) should participate in such committees. Provide opportunities for them to speak, to have their opinions considered, and to know that they are making a useful contribution.

Set a meeting agenda that covers only a few items. Provide copies of the agenda to participants in advance, so they can think about the topics and prepare to take part. An agenda might also consist of a few open-ended questions. For example: "If you were starting a program, how would you get the information to people who would benefit from it?"

Starting a new program for a specific audience will require support from others in the community. Relating the proposed program to some past effort, experience, or a successful example which the audience will recognize may help to obtain its acceptance. Identify the community situation in consultation with local community leaders who can cite facts that point up problems and opportunities. Consider involvement of individuals outside the community who may help to influence people to take action. Through the involvement of the intended audience and community leaders, obtain community support to get endorsement for your proposal. Plan to involve many people in identifying specific program goals and setting priorities, as well as in identifying what information will be collected to measure program effectiveness. "Principles of Social Action," a method outline for gaining community support, is described in appendix 4.

Planning for Evaluation

Appropriate and accurate records can provide information about the progress of the program and can serve as a way to assess the need for mid-course corrections to reach the stated goal.

You will need to decide what kind of information is needed from the participants and at what frequency.

Most federally funded programs require both "fiscal" and "program" accountability. *Fiscal accountability* is concerned with using program funds for the intended purposes. Staffing within the budget is one consideration; adhering to designated categories of spending is another. Fiscal accountability requires setting up an effective and up-to-date bookkeeping system. Requesting budget status reports at regular intervals is one way to keep track of program spending and make adjustments as needed.

Program accountability must be considered in designing, developing, and implementing a program. This type of accountability is concerned with accomplishing the objectives of the program. Since every staff member must keep records, each employee must be given time during work hours to do so. You should emphasize the importance of records as a part of the job and encourage a positive attitude toward accurate recordkeeping. (See Training Paraprofessionals—Evaluation.)

Developing Employment Standards

A program using paraprofessionals requires that appropriate employment standards be developed. Civil rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements must be observed. Cooperative Extension has a responsibility to conduct programs and provide information and educational services to all people without regard to race, color, or national origin.

Extension also must hire without discrimination as to religion, age, sex, or handicaps. Institutional policies and state laws may require still other factors, such as marital status, as nondiscriminatory standards.

Before advertising a job and employing staff, learn about the prevalent employment practices and policies. Your EEO coordinator or affirmative action officer can advise about standards and procedures, and the records to be kept to assure compliance.

Developing Job Descriptions

A description for each kind of job in the program is an important management tool. Job descriptions help the employee understand the nature and responsibility of the job. They help the supervisor keep the program on target, and can serve as a vehicle for program accountability. A typical job description includes:
- title of the job
- purpose of the position
- major duties and responsibilities
- relationships of the position to the supervisory structure
- qualifications needed for the position.

Necessary qualifications depend on the specific situation. However, they might include the ability to:
- communicate with the intended program audience
- read and write (keep records)
- learn and comprehend information about the subject matter and transfer this information to the needs of individual clients
- adapt to various situations
- meet and work with individuals and small groups, and
- follow oral instructions.

The minimum amount of formal education required varies from state to state.

If the conditions permit, consider designing several job levels so that employees have opportunities for promotion. For example, there could be three levels of paraprofessionals:
Trainee—(first year of employment). The employee learns to assume full responsibilities of Grade II and to keep records.
Grade II—The employee maintains a workload of a least 60 contacts, makes two working visits with them each month, rotates two to three families into and out of the program each month, serves some clientele through group teaching, and keeps satisfactory records.
Grade I—The employee maintains a workload of 70 to 75 program clientele, conducts teaching visits with all clientele at least bimonthly, teaches a specified percentage of the clientele weekly, rotates three to four participants into and out of the program each month, teaches 10 to 15 percent of clientele in group sessions, provides some guidance and support to volunteers, and keeps progress records.

The number of classification categories for employees may depend on the program objectives, the size of staff, and the appropriateness of different job levels in the program.

Recruiting Applicants

The first step in recruitment may be a conference with the personnel officer, since a manager must be familiar with employment practices and employee benefits. Develop or use an employment application that meets the requirements of your institution, your state, and the Federal Government. (See appendix 5, Employment Application sample.)

Interviewing Applicants

The interview procedure is used to select applicants who have the potential for learning the paraprofessional's job and successfully working with the audience. Consider convening all applicants in a joint session to explain the program purpose, objectives, delivery methods, and job expectations. Personnel policies and employment benefits are other areas that should be discussed during the orientation. The following is an agenda that could be used:

- Discuss program purpose and objectives.
- Review job responsibilities, expectations, qualifications, and basic eligibility requirements.
- Explain pay, hours, employment procedures, benefits, and training.
- Discuss specific information such as:
  - — need for a car with insurance coverage,
  - — kind of work the applicant will be doing if hired,
  - — geographic location of work,
  - — physical requirements (amount of walking, standing, or lifting),
  - — performance evaluation procedures,
  - — other particulars about the job, such as keeping records.

Then interview individuals to determine personal attributes. Interviews can be conducted in several ways:

- by the supervisor only,
- by the supervisor and a county administrator or coworker,
- by a committee of three or four individuals—supervisors, county administrator, a second professional or administrator related to the county program, an experienced paraprofessional program aide.

A small committee may be able to determine an applicant's potential better than one individual. Committee members should be familiar with the job description, the expectations, and the desired and important qualities of the position. They should understand the procedures for interviewing and how to assess the applicant against the qualifying factors. The committee members could individually and then collectively rank the qualifying factors. The result of this ranking should be presented to the employer when the person is recommended for employment.

Procedure and content for the individual interview:

- Put the applicant at ease with a few impersonal comments.
- Be friendly but businesslike. Refer to the written application if it puts you and the applicant at ease.
- Plan in advance the questions to obtain the information needed. Before the interview, contact the applicant's references and previous employer.
- Ask information-getting questions. Open-ended questions are good and can start with:
  "Tell me about. . ."
  "How do you. . ."
  "How do you feel about. . ."
- Avoid the "third degree" or trick questions.
- At the close of the interview, ask applicants whether they have any questions.
- Tell applicants approximately when they will be notified whether or not they will be employed.

Your impressions and information concerning the interview should be summarized immediately, in writing.

Selecting Applicants

Quality Ranking Factors

When selecting paraprofessionals, use quality ranking factors to assess the candidates' qualities. Quality factors are usually predetermined and often appear in the vacancy announcement. The quality ranking factors should consider such things as whether the applicants have the ability to:

- learn and apply what is taught,
- read and understand the materials that will be used,
- accept directions and suggestions from the supervisor,
- communicate orally,
- share learning with others,
- keep records and make reports,
- keep all clients' information confidential,
- work with people who may have different standards.

During the interview process, learn as much as you can about the candidate's suitability for the job. Can this person communicate with people—talk *with* them, not to them—and listen to what they say? Does the applicant speak the language of the clientele? Find out whether the candidate has access to a telephone. Some of the above qualifications may be evident during interviews. If not, obtain references to learn if the applicant is suitable for the job. Such references may help the employer to plan a training program that complements the candidate's experience or eliminates supervisory problems later.

Notifying Applicants

The applicant should receive a letter from the employer on the status of the application. Unsuccessful applicants should be told why they did not get the job. Write a letter to all applicants.

Sample Letter
To Unsuccessful Applicant

Mrs. Clara Miller
225 James Road
Harwood, Maryland 20776

Dear Mrs. Miller:

Thank you for considering employment as a paraprofessional with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program in Anne Arundel County.

We regret to inform you that we are unable to offer you this position. (Here you may want to indicate a more definite reason.) If you desire more information, please contact me.

Thank you for your interest in the Extension Service's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.

Sincerely,

Margaret Frost
Extension Home Economist

Sample Letter
Offering Applicant The Job

Ms. Margaret Williams
202 Virginia Avenue
Martinsburg, West Virginia 12435

Dear Ms. Williams:

Congratulations! We are glad to offer you a position as paraprofessional in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program with the West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service in Berkley County. You will be hired for a 30-hour week on the basis of minimum hourly wages.

Please come by my office on Friday, October 5, at 2 p.m. to complete the necessary employment papers. I would like you to start work on October 17 at 9 a.m. at which time we will begin orientation training. We are looking forward to having you as a West Virginia University Cooperative Extension Service employee.

Sincerely,

Joyce Turner
Extension Home Economist

Preparing Employee Handbook

Employees should know their rights and responsibilities and the organization's policies. These should be communicated to them in writing. An employee handbook, often a loose-leaf notebook, is a desirable reference. A handbook may include the following information:

Introduction—brief description of the program.

Organization—how the program fits into the agency or institution.

Employee's job description and responsibilities—the nature of the job.

- Training—attendance requirements.
- Reporting and recordkeeping—requirements of the job.
- Attendance—need for regularity and dependability at work, method of reporting absences.

Equal Opportunity—a statement of policy.

Pay and benefits—

- Pay—limit on hours, beginning and end of pay periods, keeping time records, when check will be received, deductions.
- Salary increases—anniversary dates, merit increments, etc.
- Annual leave/vacation—how it is earned.
- Holidays.
- Sick leave.
- Other leave (temporary, incapacitated, maternity, administrative, jury duty).
- Retirement plan.
- Group life insurance.
- Health insurance.
- Workmen's compensation.
- Unemployment compensation.
- Educational benefits.
- Other benefits.

Other information—

- Initial probationary period—how long; kind of performance evaluation to be conducted.
- Probation—causes and procedure.
- Promotion—levels of positions, evaluation, and recommendations.
- Performance evaluation—procedure and frequency.
- Change of address or name—how to report.
- Resignation, termination—procedure, forms required.
- Overtime—policy and procedure.
- Reimbursement—policy and procedure.
- Expenses—what is allowable, keeping records and receipts, when and how to submit.
- Personal finances—avoid garnishment of wages.
- Employment of relatives—policy.
- Solving problems—procedure.
- Safety—create awareness of importance.
- Contributing ideas—encourage staff to discuss ideas for program improvement.
- A brief summary statement should be included in the handbook to encourage the paraprofessional staff to ask the supervisor about employment policies and procedures.

Designing In-Service Training

In-service training and development programs for paraprofessional aides must be carefully designed. The professional will need a practical knowledge of the subject matter, plus a working knowledge of how to educate, teach, or train paraprofessionals and how to use program outreach methods. The professional as a teacher/trainer must know the "why" (objectives), the "what" (content), and the "how" (techniques, methods, skills) of training programs. She/he must also know how to evaluate the progress of the learner. An in-service program for paraprofessionals should cover:

- structure, policies, and procedures of the agency.
- objectives and intended results of the program.
- subject-matter content.
- program delivery methods—how to teach, recruit participants, and assess needs.
- evaluation—assess progress and record behavioral changes.

Structure, Policies, and Procedures

Paraprofessionals need to understand the objectives of the organization employing them, how it operates, and how, as employees, they fit into the county, state, and national structure. They need facts about their clientele, and about the relationship of their jobs to those of other employees and their supervisor. Discussing the agency's policy and management procedures early in the employment process helps to establish the work environment. Give paraprofessionals opportunities to practice each procedure and learn why each is important.

Objectives and Intended Results

Staff development plans grow from program objectives. On the basis of such objectives, one plans, for example, whether the paraprofessional will be working with individual clientele, groups, or both. Will teaching in the home be an important part of the work? Will the paraprofessional teach alone or on a teaching team?

How much freedom or independence will the paraprofessional have? What kinds of accountability will be needed? How much time will it take to prepare the aides for work? What competencies do they already have? What are the intended results of the paraprofessional teaching? How will the audience benefit?

Subject-Matter Content

What subject matter do paraprofessionals need to carry out program objectives? Are participants to learn how to prepare more nutritious meals, how to manage money, how to grow a vegetable garden, how to save energy, or how to apply a new agricultural practice? What training do the paraprofessionals need in order to teach effectively?

Consider what subject-matter content is basic for paraprofessionals to understand before they start to work with clientele and what concepts are to be transmitted to the clientele. According to program objective, what is the clientele expected to learn? Will the content be taught using a planned curriculum?

Program Delivery Methods

Teaching techniques, methods, and skills used in program delivery must be appropriate for the clientele. How can paraprofessionals best reach and teach their audiences? Low-income clientele are no more all alike than are middle-income clientele, but some techniques seem to be more successful when working with people who have experienced hardship, deprivation, or failure.

Warmth, rapport, and a caring, helping relationship will encourage learning. The section on "Teaching Low-Income Families" outlines some of the special skills and methods needed to teach subject matter to low-income audiences.

Evaluation

Assessing the participant's progress and recording behavior change is an integral part of program delivery. An effective evaluation method can help to determine the degree to which the program has achieved its objectives. An evaluation also can help determine whether paraprofessionals are working effectively. Build into each teaching concept a method to assess progress. Questions relevant to program delivery should include the following:

- How can paraprofessionals learn to evaluate the clientele's comments and practices in relation to program objectives?
- How will aides and clients learn to recognize progress?
- How will paraprofessionals understand how clients' improvement fits into their progression through the program?

Implementing In-Service Training

In-service training for paraprofessionals consists of two phases:

- initial training, when the paraprofessional is first employed and during the early stages on the job, and
- on-the-job training throughout the employment period.

Initial Training

Initial training should prepare the paraprofessionals to begin working with the audience, giving them basic skills and some opportunities to practice those skills. A mix of classroom instruction with some field experience should provide the staff member with a realistic picture of the job. This way questions and concerns can be dealt with before they develop into problems. This mix will vary with the individuals' abilities and previous experiences. Training should provide opportunities for group interaction so that aides learn from each other.

The initial training should help paraprofessionals to:

- Understand the purpose of the program and the scope of their work.
- Understand the purpose in terms of realistic, measurable accomplishments.
- Understand how people learn and change.
- Provide learning experiences appropriate to the clientele.
- Bring about changes in attitudes, knowledge, and skills of both adult and youth clientele.
- Observe and identify the behavioral changes of the participants.

- Understand and be able to communicate subject-matter content.
- Establish rapport with low-income families.
- Use principles of group teaching.
- Develop recruitment skills.
- Acquire knowledge about community resources available to the clientele, and be familiar with referral procedures.
- Recognize when clients are ready to be "graduated" from the program.
- Keep records and use the information to assess progress of the clients and determine the teaching plans.
- Understand rules, standards, and ethics that should guide their performance.

It is helpful to dispel the paraprofessional's anxieties about the new job. Plan the first session of the initial training to answer the kinds of questions anticipated from new employees. Outline the training plan and explain to the staff what they will be doing in the next few weeks. It is important that new workers feel that this is their personalized training program.

As part of the initial training, paraprofessionals should visit the agency's office if the training is conducted elsewhere. They should be given a complete picture of the organization, its programs, and how their own work fits into the total organization.

Each session of the initial training should follow a logical sequence. Put trainees at ease before presenting any subject matter. Learning is difficult if one is embarrassed or frightened. Encourage free discussion and exchange of ideas to reveal the present level of knowledge. This often provides information useful to the group. If participants are encouraged to restate problems and procedures in their own words, misunderstandings will show up and can be clarified at once. Making "cause and effect" relationships meaningful helps increase retention of the information.

Teachers need to recognize that there are plateaus in the attention span when no apparent progress is made. This indicates a need for a change of activity for a time. A short break in the teaching session or a change in teaching techniques may be appropriate. A teaching demonstration instead of lecturing may serve as a change in the method of delivery.

The importance of repetition in learning is well known. Skills and knowledge, once learned, are soon lost unless they are reinforced. Having a trainee practice a technique, describe a concept, or role-play about a skill will result in increased learning and will build greater self-confidence. Visual aids may be useful in presenting some of the subject-matter concepts.

During the training period, be generous with praise. If learning is slow, one needs to be reassuring and patient.

The level of aspiration during training can be kept high if paraprofessionals are frequently shown the end result. Seeing themselves as important parts of a team, destined to do important things for people and for society as a whole, can spur them on to renewed efforts.

The teaching/learning environment is important in initial training. Consider the background of new employees in terms of their formal education and previous experience. A friendly, informal teaching setting may be more appropriate at first than a structured classroom situation. This is especially important if the new employees have been out of school for a long time.

Select a location accessible to the employees. It should be easy to reach, with minimal transportation and parking problems. Familiar surroundings are helpful for those who have had limited experiences, but a variety of sites may be used during the training period. Some sessions may be planned in the agency office or teaching center, in neighborhood facilities, churches, outreach centers, and community centers.

Experience in training paraprofessionals suggests that small classes are more effective than large ones, with 12 to 15 participants as a maximum. Each participant needs an opportunity to practice and participate in all the learning experiences and to get individual help as needed. For sessions on subject matter or skills requiring special equipment and facilities, a more formal or workshop setting is best.

The time allowed for initial training will depend on:
- the knowledge and ability of the new employees, as well as their skills and experiences,
- the complexity of the program,
- time constraints,
- the objectives and content of the program, and
- the delivery method.

Initial training that is too brief may mean more intensive on-the-job training and a need for closer supervision later. More time may be needed to teach paraprofessionals than is usually needed for the professional worker. Presenting ideas and facts will not be enough; time to practice will be essential. Provide for realistic situations in which principles can be pointed out.

Many professionals believe a long training period creates anxiety about the job and dulls enthusiasm. Initial training should include field visits and practical experience in recruiting and teaching. For example, the paraprofessionals might have orientation for the first week and then begin recruiting and contacting the audience. This could be followed by a session to appraise the situation, make observations, and examine the results. Training might then continue with subject matter and methods, interspersed with practical experiences at the program site.

Subject-matter content will be part of both initial and ongoing training. Employees who find their initial training a pleasant experience will usually be eager to learn the fundamentals of their job and will want to begin working.

The immediate supervisor will probably teach many sessions and be responsible for the overall training. He/she should review the present knowledge and skills of new workers, adapt training sessions to fit specific individual needs, and do some individual training or counseling, if necessary.

Remember to:
- Avoid trying to cover too much information in one session.
- Have a flexible plan that allows for adjustments or additions.
- Use visuals to make the teaching more effective.
- Involve paraprofessionals in the training in as many ways as possible. Having trainees show or teach each other is a good technique. Combining the ''doing'' of a skill with the showing of ''how-to-teach'' and the ''principles of learning'' will provide reinforcement.

Select teaching methods suited to the subject matter. Avoid the prolonged use of only one method or technique. Check your training plans for a variety of methods such as:
- demonstrations
- visual aids
- slides and tapes
- video tapes
- role playing
- field trips
- workshops
- case studies or problem discussion.

Use community resources. In some areas, other professionals and agency representatives are willing to assist with training. Their participation helps paraprofessionals see the kinds of help available in working toward common goals. Community participation might include:
- A representative from a related agency discussing the agency's services for the program's prospective audience.
- A representative from the local social service office explaining how members of the prospective audience can apply for specific help and how eligibility is determined.
- A public agency representative giving statistical analysis and drawing the profile of a current situation or issue.

Do not overlook the professionals in your own agency, as well as in other local and state institutions, whose work may be relevant.

Evaluation of initial training will answer such questions as: Did the paraprofessionals assimilate the information presented? Did they acquire the skills needed to do the job?

How can you determine whether the training was effective?

- Written tests may be used if kept simple and directly related to the information given. "Before" and "after" questionnaires will reveal changes.
- Oral tests show what students have learned, and how they can transmit it verbally.
- Observing paraprofessionals at work probably gives the professional the best information about the effectiveness of the training. Observe both subject mastery and interaction with the participants. Be precise when suggesting areas that need strengthening.

Evaluate trainees on how much they know about:

- Program purpose and objective.
- Audience to be reached.
- Subject-matter content.
- Teaching methods.
- Recruitment techniques.
- Community resources.

On-the-Job Training

Training is never completed. Personal growth is one of the satisfactions derived from work. Continued learning contributes to such growth. After the paraprofessionals start work, they should continue to meet together regularly for on-the-job training and to discuss their reactions, specific problems, and approaches. Training for paraprofessionals is usually scheduled once a week early in their employment; less frequently after the first 6 months. Training once or twice a month may be adequate. However, training should be distinguished from counseling, which should be done whenever necessary. Paraprofessionals can assess their own training needs by a self-assessment process that deals with the subject matter of the program. (See appendix 6, Self Assessment Related to a Food and Nutrition Education Program.)

The supervising professional must keep in touch with the work performance and expressed needs of the paraprofessionals in planning for on-the-job training and work schedules.

On-the-job training should build on the competencies developed during initial training and early work experience. A review of the paraprofessional's experiences can identify what future training is needed. The supervisor frequently will want to give new information or teach new skills to paraprofessionals. Periodically, changes in program emphasis or new personnel policies must be explained.

An important part of good supervision is counseling—a two-way communication that gives help and support to the paraprofessional and provides feedback for the supervisor. It should also be a method for identifying further training needs. Counseling can help build cooperation, give encouragement, establish a means of evaluation, and furnish information on the individual's progress.

A helpful supervisor will practice consideration and fairness, courtesy and tact, appreciation, recognition, and praise. Supervisors should provide the staff a simple procedure for contacting them for assistance and counseling. People with problems or frustrations often do not know how to ask for help.

Be a good listener. Be and appear interested, then reinforce the listening with help and support. Be long on praise and short on criticism. If criticism is necessary, it should be constructive, pointing out possible solutions or alternatives.

Expect a lot from each staff member and display trust in each. Recognize desirable performance. Avoid possessiveness or favoritism. Remember, staff members will talk and compare among themselves.

Do not reward undesirable performance. Let paraprofessionals know how they are performing. Be informed, know their workload, be familiar with their reports and activity sheets. Learn firsthand the conditions they face. Above all, be consistent. Help them find solutions for their problems and concerns. Do not counsel in subject areas you are not trained to handle. Seek help from a trained professional.

It is helpful to have regular conferences scheduled with each paraprofessional at least once a month, or more often as needs arise. These conferences should be an event both the employee and the supervisor look forward to, as a friendly avenue for communications about the program, their work, and new ideas or methods. For effective counseling conferences:

- Keep up to date on new counseling techniques, and be prepared for difficult situations in order to head off unpleasant encounters.
- Make notes and plans in anticipation of the next scheduled conference.
- Record in writing the important areas discussed, suggestions given, and the paraprofessional's expectations. It is necessary to have a mutual understanding of the results of a conference so that expectations and followup activities are met. It may be helpful to review roles or summarize results at the close of such counseling sessions.

Successful counseling should result in a closer relationship between the supervisor and the paraprofessional, improve the work environment, and strengthen the program.

Locating Clientele

Working with low-income audiences offers a challenge not inherent in many other programs. The need to actively recruit the audience can be time-consuming and costly. Traditional publicity methods, such as flyers, posters, and radio and television announcements have had limited success in reaching low-income people.

Recruitment is most effective when it is done in person on a one-to-one basis or when it is accomplished through referrals from former or current program participants. Where formal and informal communication can be maintained, where respect for the program is established and the objective understood, recruiting the intended audience may be easier.

The supervisor may also identify and locate the clientele by using some of the following ideas:
- Use the firsthand knowledge of the staff. Paraprofessionals indigenous to the low-income community will already know many of the potential clientele. Other staff members may be able to identify low-income areas and key individuals to contact.
- Enlist the help of other agencies and groups whose staff or members can identify areas and participants who could benefit from your program.
- Establish an interagency referral system that can mutually benefit the cooperating agencies. Social services and community groups are potential resources.
- Government or private-sector surveys, as well as census data, may help in locating the audience. Census data categorize the population by income and may be helpful in identifying the number of people below the proverty level in a geographic area.
- Look for physical clues such as dilapidated housing and deteriorating neighborhoods.
- Be realistic about the size of the geographic area assigned to each paraprofessional as well as the number of potential audience living there. If staff members have to travel from one geographic area to another, consider the time and mileage needed to maintain excessive work boundaries.

Recruiting Clientele

Training for paraprofessionals should include instruction on techniques for recruiting clientele as well as field experience in recruiting. In most cases, recruiting is one of the paraprofessionals' major tasks, unless their assignment is to work with existing groups.

Encourage paraprofessionals to concentrate on recruiting until they reach the number of participants needed for their established workload. Approaches to recruiting include:
- Ongoing individual recruitment. In some programs, the audience is enrolled individually, with new participants added as others "graduate." This means a continued recruiting effort of moderate scale except during times when an optimum number of clients is being maintained and no "turnover" occurs.
- Ongoing group recruitment. Some programs may be geared to cycling an entire group through the program at certain intervals. This would require a periodic concentrated effort to enroll a new audience during a specified time period. Such a grouping may work best when the individuals have similar learning abilities.

Positive attitudes and self-confidence help overcome obstacles. "You can, if you think you can" is good advice for staff with the job of recruiting low-income participants. Discuss with paraprofessional staff their successes as well as problems in recruiting. Weekly follow-through with staff members by the supervisor on their recruitment goals helps to maintain morale and commitment.

Introducing the Program

Paraprofessionals need to know what to say about the program to make a favorable impression on potential participants. A basic "sales pitch" can be changed slightly to fit each situation. A leaflet describing the program is helpful. Role-playing and analyzing a videotape of a rehearsal can help show paraprofessionals their strengths and weaknesses in this area.

A handout leaflet for the intended audience will help the paraprofessional explain all aspects of the program. Otherwise, the client may get a distorted first impression that may lead to misunderstandings in the future. Without a handout a paraprofessional could introduce the program through the following steps:

- Introduce yourself (the paraprofessional position) and your agency. Show identification—name badge or identification card.
- Explain the purpose of the program.
- Discuss the benefits of the program.
- Tell how to become involved in the program.

The paraprofessional should relate the educational aspects of the program to the client's needs. These needs will be identified through observation and casual conversation. Questions and concerns of the potential participant should be answered during the first contact. A mutually agreeable date and time for a second teaching situation should be scheduled before the paraprofessional concludes the first teaching visit.

The supervisor can help paraprofessionals by distinguishing between nonverbal and verbal communicaton:

- Nonverbal communication—The way the paraprofessional approaches the client, the gestures and facial expressions used, will make an impression on the potential low-income participant. The implications of nonverbal communication in introducing the program to the potential audience should be discussed in training and often is most effectively demonstrated through role-playing.
- Verbal communication—Paraprofessionals must know what to say. They must understand the goals, the content, and the function of the program in order to communicate it to others. They must be able to express the basic ideas simply, concisely, and comprehensively.

Understanding the Audience

Warmth, acceptance, respect, and sincerity are basic to a teacher/learner relationship. This principle applies both when the professional teaches the paraprofessional and when the paraprofessional teaches the homemaker. Paraprofessionals need to acquire an understanding of the program audience and to appreciate the fact that different people have different values. It is important to recognize and respect the values of the people with whom one works. Participant values may differ from those of the paraprofessional, just as the paraprofessional's values may differ from the professional's.

Paraprofessionals who anticipate and accept these differences can help build a cordial, trusting relationship with their clients.

Paraprofessionals should understand their role in helping clients reach and recognize different stages of their own development. Maslow's ''Hierarchy of Human Needs'' (see appendix 7) may be used in helping a paraprofessional identify the different levels of satisfaction achieved by the participant at each level of development.

The paraprofessionals, helping relationship will bolster self-confidence and encourage program participants to develop new skills, while promoting growth and independent functioning rather than a dependency between paraprofessional and client.

Paraprofessionals should understand that learning is likely to take place when the learner:
- Is motivated, thinking, feeling, doing, and involved in the content of the lesson.
- Feels a need for information or a new way of doing or reacting.
- Sees how new information or behavior can be personally useful.
- Gains satisfaction from the learning.
- Develops standards against which new behaviors are judged.
- Continues to grow after there is self-motivation and when there is no longer dependence on reinforcement from the paraprofessional teacher.

Identifying Needs and Interests of the Audience

Encourage paraprofessionals to note needs (see appendix 8, Participant Needs) and plan their teaching accordingly. This is crucial to holding client interest. Paraprofessionals must distinguish between needs the program can meet and those it cannot. Some problems should be referred to other agencies, but paraprofessionals should be careful not to promise results that depend on the decisions of those agencies.

The paraprofessional's observation skills are important. Keeping accurate records of observations can help in analyzing the client's change in the behavior practices and skills gained. For example, are participants using the subject matter they are taught? Such notes also reflect on the paraprofessional's ability and can be reviewed as a measure of their listening and observation skills.

Paraprofessionals should develop skills in listening for clues in the questions, problems, and values expressed by participants. Sometimes what is not expressed is as important as what is said. What are participants saying or not saying, and what might this mean?

The face-to-face approach is personal. It allows discussion of the clientele's interests, concerns, and needs. This human element establishes the rapport which facilitates learning. During training, discuss ways by which paraprofessionals can engage participants in conversation. What topics might they discuss? What are some do's and don'ts?

Teaching Methods and Techniques

Again, many of the teaching methods used in training paraprofessionals can be adapted to help them teach the program audience. For instance, one can point out to the paraprofessional that learners enjoy and benefit from a variety of teaching techniques that actively involve the learner. Materials the paraprofessional uses in teaching should attract the interest of the learner, should be easy to understand, and should provide for feedback so that the teacher can tell whether learning is taking place. The following are practical suggestions for teaching low-income audiences:

Use examples generously and always ask yourself, "Does this fit the experience of the low-income client?" A good teacher must be familiar with the learner's way of life and avoid references that have little meaning to the audience.

Be explicit. Never assume that the participant has the same background and information that the teacher has. Start from the beginning. Explain all the details. Use many illustrations. Repeat often. Summarize several times. Have learners explain what they heard or understood. Go slowly and be patient.

Involve learners in doing. Include the participant in the activity as soon as possible. Talk that delays "doing" may kill interest.

Avoid creating frustrations in learners. A lack of utensils, equipment, or materials can be frustrating to the learner unless the teacher is realistic and inventive. Will the participant be expected to have supplies available for the learning situation? Can the participant read well enough to follow written instructions?

Plan learning for other family members, particularly for children. In contacts with low-income clientele, paraprofessionals will interact frequently with other members of the family. If planned, opportunities to influence children can become valuable. Reaching youth may best be done by teaching a parent how to teach a child. This may also enhance the child's image of and respect for the parent.

Plan for success. The participant should experience success—no matter how small—as quickly as possible.

One-to-One Teaching

The one-to-one teaching method has proved to be one of the most effective ways to reach low-income audiences. This clientele requires much individual attention and encouragement. Since learning is faster in familiar surroundings, this kind of teaching is

usually done in the individual's home or in a familiar setting. In one-to-one teaching, the learner is the focus of attention and the teaching can be related to individual needs. This personalized approach helps build rapport and increases feedback that helps the paraprofessional assess both needs and progress. The one-to-one teaching method should provide for:

- Personalized learning.
- Demonstrating (telling, showing, and doing) new skills to the participant using available resources.
- Exchange of questions and answers that may not surface in a group teaching situation.
- Opportunities for the participant to practice new skills as a part of each lesson.

The teaching/learning situation should be as free from distractions as possible. However, if other adults are present, they could become involved in the session. Consider providing activities for the children while the adult is being taught.

The teacher and participant need a place to sit where both can see the lesson materials and where the teacher can jot down notes. Good illustrations or other visual aids will spark the lesson and help hold the client's interest. Paraprofessionals will need to develop skills in teaching one-to-one and in small groups. The best way to counsel them on their progress is to observe them individually while they conduct teaching sessions. These are some points to look for:

- Did the lesson have a specific objective?
- Was the lesson planned with the participant's needs in mind?
- Was the teaching related to the participant's needs and the objective?
- What was the quality of teaching?
- Was the material modified for the individual's need?
- Was there evidence of past learning being put into practice?
- What techniques were used and were they effective?
- What relationship exists between paraprofessional and participant?
- How was the participant involved in the learning situation?
- What progress has been made in light of the teaching visits?
- Were plans made for the next teaching visit? How?
- Did the paraprofessional give the participant an assignment or activity in preparation for the next visit?

Cluster Group Teaching

Group participation can begin after the participants gain skills, knowledge, and confidence from their involvement and experience in the one-to-one contact. Their readiness to move into small group learning experiences illustrates a positive behavior change. The cluster usually consists of two to four persons. An advantage of the small cluster over the one-to-one method is that the group brings learners into contact with others and helps them develop social skills. They learn from each other as they share experiences. It is also important to emphasize that the cost per contact is less in group teaching.

Several teaching techniques work well with cluster groups:

- Demonstration—Participants see something being done or made and hear the explanation at the same time. People remember what they see better than what they only hear.

- Discussion—Participants and paraprofessionals talk freely about ideas and principles introduced in the lesson. This enables the paraprofessional to assess whether the participants understand the material.
- Case Study—A problem is presented to the group. It is a "real-life" situation in which the subject matter of the course is included. Collectively the group solves the problems.
- Role-Playing—A lifelike situation is suggested. Characters are described and participants act out these roles as they think the characters would.
- Question Period—Gaps in understanding could be covered by questions.
  - Use "thought-provoking questions" to introduce discussion about the teaching principles.
  - Don't use "yes or no" questions that may lead to guessing, or that are open to individual interpretation.
  - Don't use multiple choice questions that may lead to guessing.
  - Don't use negative questions that may not have a single right answer or that may lead to argument. Be sure there is one right answer if this format is used.

In training paraprofessionals, introduce teaching methods one at a time, giving them a chance to practice each. If paraprofessionals understand a variety of teaching methods, they probably will use a variety when they teach.

Points to consider when the paraprofessional is setting up a cluster group meeting:

- Meetings can be initiated very informally: "Why don't we get together at the center with your neighbor?"
- The home or community center chosen can influence attendance.
- Two-hour teaching sessions have been proven to be successful.
- Involve participants in learning activities.
- Have planned lessons, integrated into a curriculum.
- Provide handouts that support the principles or concepts taught.

Small Group Teaching

Having successfully met the challenge of one-to-one situations and cluster groups, many low-income participants will find a small group experience satisfying and nonthreatening. The small group meeting is usually held outside the home of participants.

Willingness to participate in the small group may be a sign that participants have progressed to a level in which they no longer need the individual attention provided in the one-to-one or cluster group setting. Small group teaching involves 5 to 10 participants.

The first attendance at a group meeting is often done reluctantly. How clients feel about this experience often determines their future participation.

Large Group Teaching

Large group teaching involves 11 or more learners and is often effective with more advanced participants. The large group may be held outside the home and with participants from outside the local neighborhood.

Teaching in large groups has these advantages: It is a more efficient way to reach people, and people learn by exchanging ideas and information with one another. Interactions with peers can result in a personal growth experience for participants. A disadvantage of the large group is that some participants may not have an opportunity to take an active part. Participation in the large group may indicate that the individual is ready to be phased into existing or new educational opportunities.

Suggestions for large group meetings:

- Choose a place that is convenient and familiar to participants and have someone they know invite them.
- Schedule teaching sessions for about 2 hours.
- Have someone who is familiar to the group introduce the session.
- Involve learners by asking them questions, getting their comments, and having them help in "doing things."

Other Methods

Mass contacts can reach wide audiences, although one-to-one teaching, clusters, and small groups have been the most successful methods for bringing about change with low-income clientele.

Radio, TV, and newspapers can sometimes be used to create interest and to introduce a program. Studies indicate that mass media can result in awareness, but have not changed food behavior in audiences reached. Newsletters and flyers mailed to a low-income clientele must be attractive, concise, and readable at the educational level of the audience. Pictures add interest and relieve the monotony of the printed page. Keep sentences short and vocabulary simple.

Mailed flyers usually get limited response from low-income people. A positive response is more likely if the paraprofessional has had a previous face-to-face contact with the participant.

Exhibits and demonstrations at public places such as fairs and shopping malls have limited outreach for low-income people. In most instances, they provide only awareness and have limitations as a "one-shot" contact. However, such exhibits may provide the public with program awareness.

The Supervisor's Role

The institution's organizational structure will determine the responsibility of the supervisor. This could include employing, training, day-to-day supervising, and the authority to dismiss paraprofessionals. The supervisor's authority and responsibilities should be clearly defined and made known to all persons involved.

Status within the organization influences supervision. Supervisors should feel secure and know that higher authority will support them. A local supervisor needs support from management so that within the budget and program policies, personnel and supplies will be provided to implement and conduct a program.

The goals of a supervisor are to increase productivity, eliminate problems, and reduce failures. To this end the supervisor will select employees, train them well, counsel them when necessary, and be willing to modify plans to fit new needs.

The successful supervisor will:
- encourage employees' interest in their work,
- improve their motivation,
- evaluate their performance,
- comment on and reward their good work, and
- provide opportunities for advancement.

A supervisor who has taken care of these responsibilities may never be faced with the need to discipline. A satisfied worker is rarely a troublemaker.

Self-evaluation can help a supervisor assess important management qualities. Appendix 9, Supervisor's Self-Evaluation Checklist, is an example of such a tool.

A supervisor who rates high on the "Supervisor's Self-Evaluation Checklist" has earned the respect of paraprofessionals and others on the staff and has developed a team spirit. The supervisor might arrange to be rated by the paraprofessionals, using the same checklist (unsigned). Recognizing one's inadequacies is the first step to overcoming them.

Morale and Job Satisfaction

Employee morale, although intangible, is important to accomplishing the program objective. Not all studies show a positive relation between high morale and production, but they do consistently show a direct relationship between turnover and low morale. Recruitment, employment, and training are expensive. Turnover in staff interrupts progress and occasionally it causes the program to be terminated in the affected location.

Characteristics of workers, as well as job factors, must be considered in order to understand why paraprofessionals are satisfied or dissatisfied with their work. Workers usually begin with high morale. During the first year it may drop, but as length of service increases, morale tends to go up again. The relation between personality and work satisfaction has been studied. Some findings indicate that the satisfied worker may be a better

adjusted person, or one who has the capacity to overcome the effects of an inferior environment. A worker dissatisfied with the job is often inflexible, unrealistic in choice of goals, and unable to overcome job-related obstacles. The amount of education does not necessarily affect the employee's job satisfaction.

Job Factors Affecting Morale

Aspects of the job which affect workers' morale are:
- well-defined duties,
- opportunities to gain knowledge and skills,
- personal contacts with outsiders and management,
- opportunities for creativity and self-expression,
- opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their jobs,
- variety,
- mobility,
- effects on health,
- distribution of the work,
- recognition, both public and private,
- self-respect,
- public service,
- responsibility,
- challenge,
- tension and pressure.

Supervision also influences morale. The relevant facets are:
- consideration and fairness,
- courtesy and tact,
- appreciation, recognition, and praise,
- sincerity,
- cooperation,
- encouragement,
- understanding and empathy,
- availability for assistance and consultation,
- loyalty to workers,
- manner of criticism and disciplining,
- delegation of authority,
- consistency, and
- technical competence.

Working conditions include:
- clean and orderly work place,
- absence of smoke, noise, odors,
- adequate safety,
- adequate lighting, temperature, and ventilation,
- adequate equipment and supplies,
- available parking facilities,
- recreational facilities,
- convenient geographical location, and
- access to community resources.

Wages or earnings, frequency of raises, and fairness of compensation directly affect job satisfaction. Benefits most often include:
- provisions for emergencies, such as illness or accidents,
- vacations and holidays, and
- retirement benefits.

Additional benefits can include:
- a promotion policy based on merit and seniority, and advancement within the organization,
- economic advancement,
- room to channel ambition and aspiration in order to further advancement such as in education and in a social context.

Security in a job includes such features as:
- steadiness of employment,
- feelings of being valued by the organization,
- opportunity to learn new skills, and
- seniority.

The organization contributes to job satisfaction through:
- its attitude toward workers,
- the size of the program effort,
- the respect it commands in the community,
- training programs,
- fairness in program implementation,
- administrative cooperation and assistance,
- the commitment to the audience it serves.

Some social aspects of work which affect the morale of staff members are:
- pride in belonging to a team and team accomplishments,
- competent and congenial co-workers,
- cooperation and group effort,
- size and function of work groups,
- social approval,
- interpersonal relationships,
- prejudices,
- inter- and intra-agency relations.

Communication can increase or decrease performance of a paraprofessional. Detailed coverage should be given to topics such as:
- information about new developments,
- what the organization is doing,
- personnel policies and procedures,
- instructions on program implementation,
- progress reports and evaluation of employee performance.

Many of these factors are beyond the supervisor's control. Some of them, however, can easily be modified. An effective supervisor accepts the realities of the situation, but takes action when possible in the areas which improve job satisfaction.

An unwritten rule is, "Supervise others as you would like to be supervised." Basic needs must be met if the worker is to be happy in the job. Salary should be comparable to that of similar jobs in the community; working conditions should be physically safe.

The need to belong and to be wanted continues through life. An understanding supervisor will see that all paraprofessionals are included in group activities, work, training, and planning. Being a part of a group that establishes goals and standards gives workers a feeling of belonging. Greater cooperation, enthusiasm, and production can be expected as a result.

The need to feel important must be satisfied. Let workers know how important the total program is and what a vital contribution they are making. This can begin in the employment interview, continue through training, and be included in personal contacts, supervisory observations, and personnel evaluations. Praise good work and good ideas as often as possible at the moment it is deserved. Praise enhances self-esteem if it is given in the presence of other people. Sometimes it can be put in writing to show family and friends. Give some recognition to each worker. The alert supervisor will watch for signs of jealousy and rivalry among employees.

As other needs are satisfied (Appendix 7, Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs), the desire for self-actualization becomes increasingly important. More responsibility will provide satisfaction for some workers; for others it may cause frustration or fear of failure.

Employees today are not motivated only by the necessities of life. Forces that motivate are complex, including group participation, shared decisionmaking, and personal growth. An effective supervisor will try to satisfy those psychological needs.

Rules Are Necessary

Paraprofessionals, like any other workers, are likely to shudder at such words as "control" and "discipline." Supervisors may dislike the words even more. Yet, the professional responsible for the program will sometimes need to take corrective action.

The positive approach to supervision entails employing the right people, involving them in setting standards, and providing adequate training. Frequent personal contacts, careful reading of reports, and periodic observation of the paraprofessional at work can provide information about the quality and quantity of the work being done. Having clients evaluate the teaching of the paraprofessional gives additional information, but it is a double-edged sword which must be used carefully. When the supervisor must criticize work, it is best to do it in private. Relate criticism to standards and goals previously set, to methods taught in training sessions, or to organizational policies that have been explained to the worker.

Grievances may arise between workers. Even when the supervisor feels the issue to be trivial, it should be handled at once so it will not "snowball" into a big problem. Get all the facts and then ask the people concerned to meet to talk it over. If more than one person is involved, give each an opportunity to explain the situation. Sometimes talking it over will clear the air.

Personality problems can be disruptive. In case of personality clashes, all parties should take an honest look at their personal characteristics. (See appendix 9, Supervisor's Self-Evaluation Checklist.)

Management Styles

The worker's inability to get along with people and to handle personal problems is more often cause for dismissal than is the inability to do the work. Control through orders issued from the top, carried out to the letter by those at lower levels, is autocratic. It is unacceptable to many workers and ineffective in most work situations.

Psychological influence is quite different. Here the supervisor is employee-oriented, stresses training and counseling, and de-emphasizes discipline and enforcement. When this human relations approach is used, it does not mean that the supervisor gives up control or discipline. It simply means that the supervisor is seeking to reconcile conflicts peaceably. The supervisor should understand the undesirable effects of punishment:

- Workers probably are frustrated if they feel the punishment was unfair.
- Reprimand and the thought of reprimand creates a hostile attitude. If one is reprimanded for doing a poor job, unfavorable attitudes toward the work may develop. (Rewards for good work create the opposite effect.)
- Threat of reprimand creates fear and reduces acceptance of suggestions. This is destructive rather than constructive. Training for staff in how to do the job should replace the need for "don't do that" statements.

Unsatisfactory work or misconduct should be detected early, and the effective supervisor will not ignore it. Misconduct includes tardiness, divulging confidential information, falsifying reports, absenteeism, theft, and other acts that disrupt the program. The sooner one deals with the problem openly and honestly, the better. This need not be an unpleasant confrontation.

Counseling Interviews

A counseling interview to get at the cause of the problem is probably the best way to start. The employee must be told kindly but honestly what the interview is about. If you have acquired some skill in nondirective counseling, the meeting may result in better understanding for both the worker and supervisor. Followup is important. Notice improvement or lack of it, and discuss it with the worker.

If work continues to be unacceptable, the first-line supervisor may want to bring in a second-line supervisor to determine the next step. Keep a record with dates and brief notes of each discussion. In the few cases where an employee must be discharged, the supervisor should have some evidence concerning the period of time the work was unsatisfactory and the steps that were taken to try to correct the situation.

If the counseling session reveals a need for specific assistance, provide it promptly. If improvement is not evident in a reasonable length of time, contact the employee for another interview. The third session, if needed, probably should include both the first-line supervisor and the second-line supervisor or the personnel director.

In most cases, the first-line supervisor does not have authority to dismiss an employee. Do not threaten dismissal unless there is authority to support it. Long before a misconduct problem reaches the stage where dismissal is considered, the first-line supervisor should have acquainted his/her supervisor with the case.

Performance Appraisals

Performance appraisals should be conducted systematically. Appraisals often are done at 3- and 6-month intervals during the first year of employment. After the probation period, the formal performance evaluation usually is done annually. The worker's knowledge of the subject matter should be part of the performance appraisal.

During both initial and on-the-job training, performance appraisals should be conducted formally and informally. This type of performance appraisal is a continuing process of comparing "what is" with "what should be." It determines what progress is being made and where improvement is needed. It is the essential function of a supervisor to acquaint employees with the evaluation system (tasks and standards) by which their performance will be judged. The employees should be aware of how the supervisor perceives their performance related to tasks and standard goals. Performance appraisal should be an ongoing exchange between supervisor and paraprofessional. The employee should be directly involved in planned opportunities and activities to gather pertinent data and to observe work performed.

Suggestions for helping people improve job performance:

- Don't try to change a personality. Concentrate on changing performance.
- Improve supervisory skills, such as ability to observe, listen, appraise, and counsel.
- Determine to what extent the supervisor and paraprofessional agree on role expectations.
- Listen to the paraprofessionals' views of their performance evaluations. How do they differ from those of the supervisor?
- Decide where performance needs to be changed and get the workers' understanding and acceptance of this need.
- Explore the causes of poor performance. Emphasize *what* is to blame, not *who* is to blame.
- Consider the possibility of changing the situation as well as the paraprofessional's performance.

Appendixes 10 and 11 are sample forms for evaluating the paraprofessional's performance. The supervisor should conduct the evaluation and should discuss the results with the paraprofessional.

Rewards and Recognition

Recognition for outstanding performance may be given in the form of group or individual awards. Awards are frequently presented at district or statewide events. Members of the administration frequently preside at the recognition session, where program and other support staff members from the top leadership are present.

The individual or group award may be in the form of a certificate based on outstanding service or length of service. Recognition may include an increase in salary or fringe benefits such as study leave.

Individual rewards are difficult to award among employees who have the same job performance, but special instances of innovative action can be singled out for recognition.

The following are examples of how individual achievement can be recognized:
- Feature an outstanding paraprofessional in a news article or radio program.
- Select the paraprofessional to present a program on television or radio or at a public event.
- Present a certificate of appreciation for a special assignment.
- Select paraprofessionals to participate in a state training program or other state event because they have acquired some specific skill or ability related to achieving the program objective.
- For a specific innovative action, nominate the individual for a state award.

Evaluating the Program

Purpose

Why evaluate? Evaluation helps the supervisor make important decisions about the program. It helps to decide if the program is:
• needed,
• moving in the right direction,
• achieving its objective.
• serving a purpose.

Other reasons for evaluating are to:
• gather information for making other management decisions,
• identify strengths and weaknesses in the program,
• gain support for continuing or expanding the program.
• compare effects of different types of programs,
• develop new and improved processes and methods,
• determine costs of the program in terms of resources (human and monetary).
• justify present or projected allocation of resources.

What is Evaluation?

To evaluate a program, one needs a criterion and some evidence to make a judgment. A criterion is a standard against which progress can be measured. Evidence is an outward sign or other kinds of factual information that show whether the quality one is looking for is present. Judgment is a conclusion as to whether the evidence shows that a program has met the criteria set for it. To arrive at a judgment, the evaluator must have a clear picture of what "should be." When the evidence indicates that some aspect of the program differs from established criteria, an adjustment in program may be needed or a standard among the criteria may have to be reidentified.

Establishing the Criteria

Before the program is implemented, measurable criteria should be established to set the desired level of achievement for the participants. When these criteria are reached, the participants should "graduate." The clients' participation in the program should be terminated or phased into other educational opportunities.

If uniform standards of desired participant behavior are agreed upon. a checklist can help determine progress. If the same checklist is used at intervals (every 2 months, for example) it is possible to measure the effectiveness of the program and to see—even chart—progress or the lack of it. Such a graphic display will help paraprofessionals make decisions about the participants and the program.

Evaluation Procedures

The evaluation process includes a number of steps, which could be identified as follows:
1. Decide what you want to know about a specific program, and state the defined objective.
   — Define the criteria against which the evidence will be judged.
   — Identify what information (evidence) is required.
   — Define the audience for the evaluation report.

2. Plan to collect evidence.
   — Identify sources of information.
   — Select methods; develop instruments and forms for collecting information.
   — Specify the sampling procedure.
   — Establish a time schedule for collecting information.
   — Determine who will collect information.
3. Analyze data and interpret findings.
   — Assemble information for comparison.
   — Compare the evidence with the criteria and develop conclusions and recommendations.
4. Use the results.
   — What changes (in the program or methods) are indicated from the evaluation?
   — Who will implement the changes? When? How?
   — How much will it cost?
   — Is there a budget for this purpose?

Designing and Using Evaluation Tools and Techniques

Behavior can be observed by listening to a person talk or by watching overt actions. Although observation is good, however, it is often not enough. Other techniques have been designed to measure behavior changes. These can help the supervisor gather evidence on what a person knows, feels, and does. In designing evaluation tools and techniques, focus on the objective of the program. The result of evaluation also may be valuable for accountability purposes and making judgments about program effectiveness. Here are some evaluation tools:

- Tests of knowledge—Testing will tell whether the learner acquired knowledge as intended. It also will tell whether a paraprofessional has imparted information to the clientele.
- Tests of understanding—To test comprehension, present paraprofessionals with a new situation and see whether they can apply the appropriate principles.
- Performance ratings—These test the degree to which the skills have been acquired. Scorecards and rating scales usually are used to measure skills, performance, and abilities. Scorecards are used extensively for judging behavior changes. The skill to be rated is carefully analyzed; each aspect is considered separately.
- Attitude scales—These can show how people feel toward things and whether they are "for" or "against" certain issues or problems. The attitudes and beliefs of paraprofessionals and clientele are important. These can be identified when people are in a situation where they feel free to express what they feel or think.
- Value scales—These can determine what people think is important. A value scale can be used to find out what people think before teaching begins, and afterwards to determine whether change has occurred.
- Interest checks—These can identify people's interests. Programs may succeed or fail in proportion to the audience's interest in the subject.
- Adoption of practices—Documenting the adoption of a recommended practice shows that the person has changed behavior and acquired new attitudes, knowledge, skills, and understanding.

The paraprofessional should evaluate the progress of the participants periodically. Have the participants adopted the practices that the paraprofessional taught?

The assessment should be conducted systematically. First, define the goal(s) in measurable terms. Second, establish a ''benchmark'' which documents where the learner is with respect to the program goals. The distance between where the learner is and the goals to be reached should determine the nature, frequency, and intensiveness of the teaching/learning situations. Monitoring and documenting the teaching/learning situation should show the rate of progress and the improvement the participant has made. If the rate of progress is not reasonable, teaching methods, techniques, frequency of instruction, participant interests, and commitment to program objectives need to be re-examined.

Appendix 1
Definitions

Low-income audience or clientele—Individuals living in poverty, as defined by the Poverty Index; often living in low-grade housing with limited resources. Within this group, specific categories may be identified—families with young children, youth 9 to 14 years of age, tenant farmers, families with one or both parents in the household.

Paraprofessional—A paid staff member who receives direction from professionals and is employed to assist or extend the efforts of professionals through direct contact with clientele in the conduct of an educational program. Paraprofessionals are often called program aides. The position is usually restricted to individuals who do not have a baccalaureate degree. The individual usually is indigenous to the target audience.

Participant—The individual who is involved or enrolled in the program; the person with whom the paraprofessional works.

Professional—A person who is employed by the Cooperative Extension Service and has a professional appointment with a state land-grant university, and who has responsibility for the conduct of various Extension programs. The person is a college/university graduate with at least a baccalaureate degree.

Program delivery methods:

Cluster group meeting—An informal meeting of two to four participants, often held in a home or a nearby facility for the purpose of presenting a planned subject-matter lesson.

Large group meeting—A meeting of 11 or more targeted low-income individuals. This meeting is most often held outside the home and with participants other than neighbors.

One-to-one teaching—A method of instruction where a paraprofessional teaches a single participant. One-to-one teaching usually takes place when the environment and the socioeconomic isolation of the participant are not conducive to a small group meeting.

Small group meeting—An informal meeting of 5 to 10 participants, usually held outside the home.

Supervisor—Title used for the professional responsible for training and supervising paraprofessionals and for managing the program.

Trainee—Paraprofessional applicant who has entered the service and is receiving initial training.

Appendix 2
Government Studies of Paraprofessionls

The U.S. Department of Labor and the American Home Economics Association jointly conducted a survey on paraprofessionals in 1960. Here the paraprofessional was identified as an individual who is working within a professional field but who has not received a baccalaureate degree.

A 1964 National Institute of Mental Health grant, under the direction of Frank Reissman and Arthur Pearl, studied the staff requirements for serving the low-income sector of our population. This study described the process of planning with people through paid or volunteer indigenous leadership as contrasted with the formerly prevalent practice of planning for them by experts. The study supported the idea of sharing practical know-how in bringing people together and of provoking mutual understanding about concerns among people of widely differing social and economic backgrounds. Reissman advocates making the subprofessional (paid) indigenous leadership—such as mental health consultants, psychiatric aides, and educational aides—an intrinsic part of the service machinery.

''Indigenous people,'' Reissman continues, ''have the same social background, the same attitudes and values as well as a familiar pattern of language to facilitate their communication with people needing professional service. They serve as two-way interpreters: of the community service value to the persons in need and who had not known about the existing services; and of the client's situation to the services.''[1]

The Federal Extension Service, USDA, studied the paraprofessional position through a 5-year cooperative agreement study (1965-1969) with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service.[2] The results of the study showed that:

- paraprofessionals under the supervision of professional home economists can be trained to teach low-income families effectively,
- an educational program tailored to the interests, needs, competencies, and the economic and educational level of homemakers can be effective in changing their eating habits.

The U.S. Civil Service Commission in 1970 conducted a study of paraprofessional positions. Three EFNEP sites (Waco and San Antonio, Texas, and Washington, D.C.) participated. The study tested how well aides followed directions to perform tasks related to specific job assignments. Since the ability to follow instructions is an important aspect of many human-service support jobs, the study attempted to provide a new method to assess such potential, particularly of persons with limited educational backgrounds.

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[1]Reissmann, Frank and Pearl, Arthur: New Careers for the Poor, the Non-Professional in Human Service, Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1965.

[2]Five-Year Report of Pilot Project Involving Young Homemakers in Low-Income Rural Areas in Alabama. Conducted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with USDA's Federal Extension Service, 1965-1969.

This study also provided technical assistance in how to select paraprofessionals for state civil service and merit system agencies. Contrary to the expectations, there was no consistent tendency for those with more schooling to make higher scores. Both high and low scores were made by persons with similar amounts of education. The average age of the paraprofessionals in this study was 36 years. There was a correlation between the age and the score. Younger paraprofessionals tended to do better on tests than the older ones. In 1971 the Federal Extension Service helped the Commission compile a summary of critical incidents of behavior following the experiment. These data were used to develop a suggested performance evaluation instrument which was used as a reference by Extension and other professional organizations in developing job descriptions and performance evaluations for paraprofessionals.

In 1971 the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare/Health Services and Mental Health Administration and the Office of State Merit Systems issued a publication, "Guide, Class Specifications for Nutritionists in State and Local Public Health Programs." This guide included a minimum of qualifications for paraprofessionals in nutrition education. The prerequisites, knowledge, skills, and abilities were similar to those identified by the Cooperative Extension Service in the early sixties.

The U.S. Office of Education and the American Home Economics Association conducted a half-million dollar study to survey and develop a curriculum for home economics related occupations requiring less than a baccalaureate degree. The study identified a curriculum and materials for training paraprofessionals in food service jobs, in family management, and in areas of service to the aging. The curriculum also promoted job mobility in a cluster of related jobs. The study advocated the involvement of the paraprofessional in identifying training needs.

Appendix 3
Needs Assessment Guide

Type of Assessment: Neighborhood ☐ Precinct ☐ Town ☐
District ☐ City ☐ State ☐

Number of Participants	Percentage of Total Population	Situation	Source of Data
________	________	Food stamp recipients	Health and Human Services
________	________	Women, Infant and Children recipients (WIC)	Health and Human Services
________	________	Children receiving free or reduced price lunches	County School District
________	________	Children receiving school breakfast	County School District
________	________	Families with income below poverty level	Census Data and Social Services
________	________	Families receiving social services	Census Data and Social Services
________	________	Children enrolled in kindergarten	Local or State Department of Education or School Board
________	________	School dropouts	School District
________	________	Unemployment	State or Local Office of Employment Services or Department of Labor
________	________	Persons receiving unemployment compensation	State or Local Office of Employment Services or Department of Labor
________	________	Educational status of adults	U.S. Census data
________	________	Housing conditions	Local Housing Authority

________	________	Families living in low-rent public housing	County, City Government
________	________	Clients of Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)	FmHA office
________	________	Statistics on characteristics of local populations	U.S. Census, Chamber of Commerce, surveys conducted by Urban Development Council, private industry, etc.

Before conclusions can be drawn, the items described under "Situation" should be ranked.

Appendix 4
Principles of Social Action

Starting a program for a low-income audience requires support from others in the community. Here are some steps which might be useful in gaining the necessary support.

Step 1 — *Relate the proposed program to the community* (or local area) and to the existing situation. Refer to information collected from U.S. Census, specific or special studies or surveys, etc.
Cite data that point out problems and opportunities.

Step 2 — *Relate the proposed program to some major situation or effort, past experiences, or a successful previous program which the audience may identify with or recognize.*
Who tried what, with whom, before?
What were the results?
What can be learned from this?

Step 3 — *Identify the problem,* situation, or opportunity (related to information collected in Step 1).

Step 4 — *Consider outside forces* that may influence people to take action (for example, national concern about low-income families, school dropouts, environmental problems, water supply, etc.).

Step 5 — *Identify local community leaders* concerned with the audience or those who have an interest in the subject matter—usually a few people—to initiate the project.

Step 6 — *Get community support* and obtain assistance through the involvement of the intended audience and community leaders in an effort to get endorsement of a proposal. Individuals who can provide community support include:

- Representatives from the target audience.
- Leaders and organizations who already support the basic idea.
- Individuals and groups who add prestige.
- Individuals who can provide skills and resources.
- Media communicators.
- Individuals who may oppose the plan, but whose help is needed in obtaining community support.
- Individuals who might favorably influence the opposition.

Step 7 — *Involve many people in planning.* Invite key individuals identified in Step 6 to help develop the proposed program.

Step 8 *Organize for action.* Ask key individuals (Step 6) to help make organizational decisions. Get their commitment during a public meeting, in a committee, when others are present.

- Write out specific program goals. Set priorities. Action plans may change as the program is implemented, but reference to long-range goals will help to maintain program direction.

Step 9 *Evaluation.* There should be clear decisions about what constitutes success. What information will be collected to measure the program effectiveness, how frequently, by whom? How will the project be expanded or its future determined in case there is a shift in funds? How will priorities be set after evaluation results are available?

Step 10 *Assign responsibilities.* Who has the overall responsibility for planning, implementation, and evaluation? Who is responsible for reporting program accomplishments—how, when, to whom, what, and where?

Who coordinates the program at the operating level?

Who provides what resources?

How will facilities be obtained and financed?

Who recruits personnel? Who handles personnel details and salaries, etc.?

Who trains personnel?

What is the role of the program initiator?

What is the role of each paid staff person?

What is the paraprofessional's role?

When and where will the program start?

How long will the program be continued?

What results are expected 1 year from the start?

Appendix 5
Example: Employment Application Form

Name: ____
First Last

Address: ____
Number Street

____
City State Zip Code

Social Security Number ______-______-______ ______ ______ ________
Month Day Year of Birth

U.S. Citizen ☐ YES ☐ NO

School You Last Attended: ______________________________________
Name of School

____
City State Zip Code

Highest Grade Completed: ____________________

Have you received any other special training (such as: sales work in store, restaurant, typing, keypunching, nurse's aide, teacher's aide, or as a volunteer)?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please describe the training: ______________________________

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

List three former employers who may be contacted as references. (List the most recent first):

1. Firm or Employer: ______________________

   Date of Employment: From __________ To __________

   Person to Contact: ______________________

   Address: ______________________
   Number Street

   ____
   City State Zip Code

   Your Responsibilities: ______________________

   ____

   ____

   Reason for Leaving: ______________________

   ____

2. Firm or Employer: ______________________

   Date of Employment: From __________ To __________

   Person to Contact: ______________________

   Address: ______________________
   Number Street

   ____
   City State Zip Code

   Your Responsibilities: ______________________

   ____

   ____

   Reason for Leaving: ______________________

   ____

3. **Firm or Employer:** ____

Date of Employment: From __________ To __________

Person to Contact: ____

Address: ____
Number Street

____
City State Zip Code

Your Responsibilities: ____

____

____

Reason for Leaving: ____

____

(Use language questions only if it is part of the job requirement.)

Do you *speak* any language other than English? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, what language? ____

Do you *write* any language other than English? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, what language? ____

Do you have the use of an automobile for work? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please note that __________ requires employees who use their cars for work to have a valid driver's license and automobile insurance with limits of liability of at least __________ per person injured, __________ for all injuries in one accident, and __________ for property damage.

Proof of minimum coverage, as above, must be submitted before you can use your car on the job.

The goal of the program you are applying for is to improve the diet of low-income families by teaching them skills and food and nutrition information. Why would you like to do this kind of work?

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

I hereby certify that I have completed this application to the best of my knowledge.

_______________________ Signature ______ Date

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

To Be Completed by Supervisor
If Applicant is Hired:
Date of Employment: _______________________
Number of Working Hours: _______________________
Specific Title in the Program: _______________________

State employment laws may require additional information to be collected on application form.

Appendix 6
Example: *Self-Assessment Related to a Food and Nutrition Education Program

What others learn from you depends on what you know and how you teach it. Below are some skills that are important in teaching program participants. The blocks under each skill are numbered from left to right. Show the amount of training you think you will need in each skill, in order to be able to teach. The 0 stands for the least need for help; 5 is for the greatest need. For instance, if you think you need little or no training, you might circle blocks 0 or 1; for an average amount, circle 2 or 3; and if you need much help, circle block 4 or 5.

1. Ability to teach individuals.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
2. Ability to teach small groups.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
3. Ability to recognize what people know and to start teaching at that point.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
4. Ability to "get along" with homemakers regardless of their situation.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
5. Ability to take suggestions.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
6. Ability to maintain my enthusiasm and interest when progress is slow.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
7. Ability to develop new and interesting ways to present subject matter.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
8. Ability to adapt/teach subject matter to the needs of the individual being taught.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help

*A self-assessment instrument can be developed to reflect the subject matter of any field using paraprofessionals.

From time to time during your employment you may be asked to teach a homemaker some of the following subjects. (Food and nutrition subject matter is used in the statements below; however, statements can be adapted to any content area.) Please circle the number which will show your supervisor how much help you will need before you teach each of the following:

1.	Recognizing the importance of nutritious food to the health and well-being of the family.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
2.	Understanding the basic food needs of children.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
3.	Understanding the basic food needs of teenagers.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
4.	Understanding the basic food needs of adults.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
5.	Understanding the basic food needs of older people.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
6.	Checking meals to know if they meet individual needs.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
7.	Judging family meals for variety, color, texture, and flavor.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
8.	Planning family meals to include the basic four food groups.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
9.	Observing family food habits.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
10.	Understanding family food habits.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
11.	Ways to improve family food habits.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
12.	Understanding the importance of safe (and sanitary) storage and handling of food.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
13.	Reading and understanding a recipe.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help

14. Understanding when and how to make substitutions in a recipe using available food supplies.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
15. Arranging an attractive table at family mealtime.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
16. Using dry milk in family meals.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
17. Preparing less expensive cuts of meat for variety and flavor.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
18. Selecting and preparing foods which may be used for meat alternate.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
19. Preparing fish in a variety of ways.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
20. Preparing poultry in a variety of ways.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
21. Using leftovers wisely.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
22. Storing, preparing, and cooking vegetables.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
23. Baking good quick breads.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
24. Baking yeast breads.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
25. Baking cakes and cookies.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
26. Preparing puddings, custards, and/or fruit desserts.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
27. Introducing new foods to the homemaker.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
28. Preparing simple, low-cost salads.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
29. Packing a good, inexpensive lunch.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help

30. Preparing nutritious snacks.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
31. Buying according to a plan.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
32. Buying foods for nutritional food value.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
33. Reading and understanding labels.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
34. Comparing costs of foods in different forms.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
35. Recognizing and using inspection and grades as guides to quality in food products.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
36. Ways to save money by using fresh produce.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help
37. Understanding food store advertisements.	Need little or no help	0	1	2	3	4	5	Need much help

Appendix 7
Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs[1]

The aim of this exercise is to help paraprofessional program aides understand their role in helping participants reach the different levels of satisfaction as they arrive at each stage of development. The supervisor will need to:

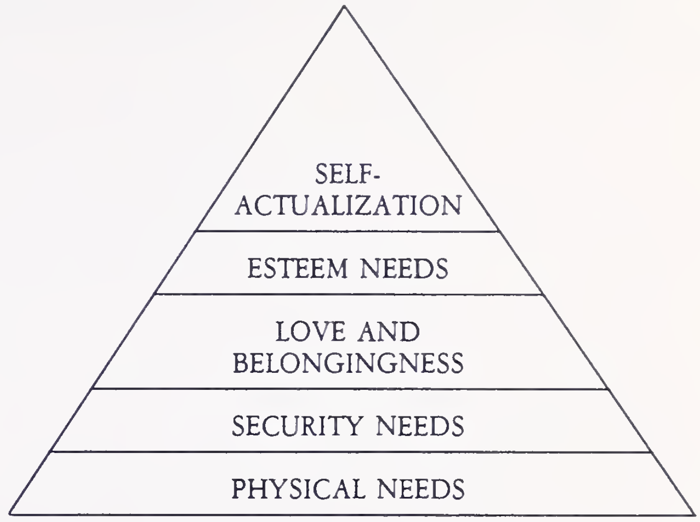
1. Explain and interpret in simple words *The Hierarchy of Human Needs*. (See appendix 8.)

2. Hold discussion with paraprofessionals to make sure they understand how this hierarchy applies to everyone, and especially to the participants enrolled in the program.

3. Assign each paraprofessional to:
   - Think of a program participant who cooperates.
   - Point out which needs the participant has satisfied.
   - Decide on the participant's present needs and how these can be fulfilled. Use "Participants' Needs" chart, Appendix 8.
4. Discuss the above assignment in an individual conference with paraprofessionals.

Description

The Hierarchy of Human Needs diagram identifies levels of human needs. Each need depends on the fulfillment of the need below it. These needs apply to all of us and can help us understand how other people respond. The supervisor can use the diagram to explain the hierarchy of needs to the paraprofessional. See "Participant's Needs" chart (appendix 8) which describes the step-by-step progress and how needs are met.



The Hierarchy of Human Needs

1. **First needs are physical.** People who are ill or hungry cannot move, do, act, or learn until this need is taken care of.
2. **Security needs** demand attention next. Knowing that one is safe within a pattern of life is important. For example, participants should know what may happen if they participate in the program. Will this action cut off a service they currently receive or threaten their housing situation? A participant needs to know what to expect and to feel safe.
3. **Love and belongingness.** After the security need is met, a desire to be liked becomes a third need. At this point the participant will do many things if someone cares. Being praised and feeling accepted are important. For this reason the participants may respond to, or because of, the paraprofessional. A small failure could cause feelings of rejection. Participants will need much support, assurance, and personal warmth.
4. **Esteem needs** arise after other needs are satisfied. Not only do the participants want to be liked; they will then wish to be regarded highly by others.
5. **Self-actualization** concerns the need to develop potentialities. People are free to make the most of themselves only when they feel that the preceding needs are met. Once the development reaches this level, they can give attention to developing their own potentialities.

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[1] A.H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, Harper and Row, New York, New York, 1954.

Appendix 8
Participant's Needs
(For Paraprofessional Use)

1. ______________________________
   Name of participant on which progress will be assessed.

2. What can you do to help the participant fulfill present needs:
   ____
   ____
   ____

V. SELF-ACTUALIZATION
—Wants to do things for self-satisfaction.

IV. ESTEEM NEEDS
—Wants to be useful and be known as someone of worth.

III. LOVE AND BELONGINGNESS
—Knows someone cares about them and will praise them if they do well.

II. SECURITY NEEDS
—Knows what to expect from program. Is interested and willing to participate and is benefiting.

I. PHYSICAL NEEDS
—Has basic food and clothing and place to live. No physical suffering.

The participants will progress step by step (I, II, etc.) in terms of how their needs are met.

Appendix 9
Supervisor's Self-Evaluation Checklist

Self-evaluation can help a manager assess important supervision qualities. Score yourself on the following characteristics and think of examples that will support the responses:

Personal Characteristics	Yes	No	Examples
Approachable			
Open-minded			
Fair and impartial			
Control of temper			
Faithful to promises			
Patient			
Consistent			
Appreciative			
Reasonable			
Loyal to staff			
Willing to admit errors			
Sense of humor			
Politeness			

Management Characteristics

Gives leadership
Is impartial and objective
Takes initiative
Gives recognition
Has technical competencies

Appendix 10
Example: Paraprofessional Performance Evaluation

Name: ______________________

(For Supervisor's Use)

Section 1—Rating the Paraprofessional

Rating categories and their definitions are as follows:

1 = Poor—falls below minimum requirements
2 = Meets all minimum requirements satisfactorily
3 = Above average—substantially exceeds all requirements

Fill in the numerical rating in blanks below:

A. Quality of planning prior to direct teaching:

______ 1. Lesson plans
______ 2. Planning the day
______ 3. Scheduling
______ 4. Punctuality (Reports to work on time, keeps appointments with participants, etc.)

B. Are reports on time?

______ 1. List of adult participants
______ 2. List of youth participants
______ 3. Monthly planning guide
______ 4. Group meeting report
______ 5. Participants' records
______ 6. Time sheets (to be kept up on a daily basis)
______ 7. Expenses with appropriate receipts
______ 8. Special reports when requested

COMMENTS: ______________________
____
____

C. Are records complete and accurate?

______1. List of adult participants
______2. List of youth participants
______3. Monthly planning guide
______4. Group meeting report
______5. Participants' records
______6. Time sheets
______7. Expenses with appropriate receipts
______8. Special reports when requested

D. In training sessions, is paraprofessional

______1. Attentive
______2. Punctual
______3. Involved
______4. In attendance

		SECTION 1
	A	________
	B	________
Possible Score = 72	C	________
	D	________
		________
Subtotal		________

Section 2—Paraprofessional Interaction with Clientele

Rating categories and their definitions are as follows:

1 = Seldom falls below minimum requirements
2 = Usually meets all minimum requirements satisfactorily
3 = Frequently substantially exceeds all requirements

A. Subject-Matter Competence

______ 1. Indicates knowledge/subject-matter presented in training
______ 2. Gives accurate information to the client
______ 3. Recognizes own limitations in subject-matter knowledge
______ 4. Seeks and accepts assistance from the professional before using new materials and approaches

B. Teaching Ability

______ 1. Involves clients in determining their own educational interests and needs and starts teaching from that point
______ 2. Uses bulletins, leaflets, and other teaching aids as supportive material rather than just handing them to the client
______ 3. Encourages the client to do and repeat an activity
______ 4. Displays creativity (innovative ideas and approaches)

COMMENTS: ______________________
____

C. Rapport with Clientele

______1. Respects the values of each client
______2. Praises clients for progress, no matter how small
______3. Accepts clients as they are and works effectively within their unique situations

D. Work Load

______1. Has the agreed-upon number of clients
______2. Recruits clients into the program after initial visits
______3. Graduates clients who are ready to move on to other programs
______4. Drops clients who have needs beyond their ability to help or who make no effort to use information taught
______5. Provides opportunities to move clients from one-to-one teaching into small group meetings

SECTION 2

A ____________
B ____________
Possible Score = 48 C ____________
D ____________
____
Subtotal .... ____________

(Use same rating system as Section 2)

Section 3—Paraprofessional's Interaction With the Professional and Other Team Members

A. Professional

______ 1. Cooperates
______ 2. Feels free to discuss job problems with professionals
______ 3. Understands and respects the role of the professional

B. Team members

______ 1. Cooperates with others
______ 2. Shares ideas
______ 3. Understands own and other team members' roles

C. Loyalty

______ 1. To organization
______ 2. To the purpose of the program
______ 3. To program clientele

COMMENTS: ______________________
____
____

Section 4—Paraprofessional's Interaction With Community Resources

A. Knowledge of other agencies

______ 1. Knows community resources
______ 2. Makes proper referrals and followup
______ 3. Keeps the office current on referrals

B. Relationship with other agencies

______ 1. Represents the program well
______ 2. Understands and respects the role of the program in relation to other programs in community

COMMENTS: ______________________
____

SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SUB-TOTAL
A ________	A ________	Sec. 1 ______
B ________	B ________	Sec. 2 ______
C ________		Sec. 3 ______
Sub-Total______	Sub-Total______	Sec. 4 ______
Possible Score = 30	*Possible Score = 15*	
		Total ______
		Possible Score = 165

KEY	
Above average	143-165
Average	123-142
Poor	122 or less

Appendix 11
Example: Performance Plan

PERFORMANCE PLAN

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
Cooperative Extension Service
Michigan State University

Name ____________________

Employee Title: SA ☐ PA ☐ County ____________

Performance Rating (Check)
☐ Good ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Unsatisfactory
Check: ☐ Annual ☐ Quarterly Evaluation

Education of the EFNEP Homemaker
Compliments:

Goals:

New Family Recruitment and Volunteer Development
Compliments:

Goals:

Job-Related Development
Compliments:

Goals:

Reference: Increased Productivity Through Performance Appraisals, Gary Latham, Kenneth Wexley Addison Wesley Management Resource Series

Record Keeping
Compliments:

Goals:

Staff Relations
Compliments:

Goals:

Results
Compliments:

Goals:

I certify that this evaluation was reviewed with me by my supervisor. My signature does not necessarily indicate my concurrence.

Employee Name ____ Date

Home Economist ____ Date

County Extension Director ____ Date

Department Administrator ____ Date

LEP 4432-pb EP 22

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White copy— State EFNEP Office
Canary copy— State EFNEP Office
Pink copy— Employee's County File
Goldenrod— Employee

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University

______ Name ______ County ______ Date of Employment (Month/Year) ______ Appraisal Date

Evaluation Period: ☐ October-December ☐ January-March ☐ April-June ☐ July-September

Completed by: ☐ Aide ☐ Extension Home Economist ☐ Supervisory Aide ☐ Compiled Copy

Program Performance Appraisal

Introduction

This performance appraisal behavior observation scale has been developed with input from EFNEP staff. It is developed to be used for staff performance counseling and development. The behavior observation scale provides a realistic job review.

An equally important function of this behavior observation scale is that it allows supervisors and aides alike to know what is expected of them and to provide feedback to one another as to areas where they are doing well and areas where improvement is needed. This information is provided a minimum of four times per year. This is necessary because performance feedback is critical for maintaining employee growth, motivation (goal setting), and job satisfaction.

Completion

Please consider the individual's *observable* behavior on the job for the past evaluation period. Read each statement carefully. *Circle the number* that indicates the *extent* to which *this person has demonstrated this behavior.*

- 5 represents 95-100 percent of the time
- 4 represents 85-94 percent of the time
- 3 represents 75-84 percent of the time
- 2 represents 65-74 percent of the time
- 1 represents 0-64 percent of the time

NA represents that the behavior was not observed by the rater for this evaluation period.

Previous to the performance appraisal session with the aide, the Behavior Observation Scale should be completed by the

- —Home Economist
- —Supervisory Aide
- —Aide

Items will be scored/rated only if you have actually been able to observe the behavior mentioned in the item. During the performance appraisal session with the Aide, Home Economist, and Supervisory Aide, a new Behavior Observation Scale will be completed to determine the employee's rating.

Comments should be recorded under each dimension on the performance plan sheet regarding the employee's performance. Comments should be recorded under the dimension's "compliments" or "goals" sections.

All forms (compiled) and work copies (copies completed by Extension Home Economist, Supervisory Aide, and Aide) will be turned into the State EFNEP office. An analysis on the completed forms will be conducted to help us determine validity and reliability of the performance appraisal items.

A copy of the employee's:
- Aides List of Families
- List of EFNEP Volunteers
- List of Youth EFNEP Participants

for the past month should also be submitted at the performance appraisal session.

Completed performance appraisal forms should be forwarded as follows:

- White copy— State EFNEP Office
- Green copy— State EFNEP Office
- Canary copy—State EFNEP Office
- Pink copy— Employee's County file
- Gold copy— Employee

Examples

An example of two items are given below. If an aide comes to work on time 95 to 100 percent of the time, circle a 5. If he/she is late most of the time (0-64 percent), circle 1.

(1) Aide comes to work on time.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

If the Aide disturbs staff while working in the office 95 to 100 percent of the time, circle a 5. If he/she never disturbs staff in the office circle a 1, indicating 0 to 64 percent of the time.

(2) Aide disturbs staff while working in the office.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

Education of the EFNEP Homemaker

The Aide:

1. Organizes a daily/weekly work schedule in a time efficient manner.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
2. Organizes lesson plans previous to the appointment with the homemaker.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
3. Aide visits homemaker without an appointment.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
4. Aide does not keep appointments with homemaker.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
5. Uses canceled appointment time to make new contacts, plan lessons, complete assignments or visit another homemaker.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
6. Sets developmental goals with the homemaker.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
7. Plans lessons which directly relate to goals which have been set with the homemaker.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
8. Plans menus and grocery lists to include items beyond the families' resources.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
9. Adapts lesson plans and recipes to the family's situation.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
10. Presents lessons in a related sequence.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
11. Provides homemaker with unapproved information on food and nutrition.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
12. Hands out pamphlets rather than teaches.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
13. Teaches without using available visual aids.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
14. Fails to involve homemaker in lesson plans and in the preparation of food.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
15. Teaches in group situations, to make better use of time and resources.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
16. Involves EFNEP youth in nutrition lessons.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

Teaches Homemakers information on the following:

17. Basic Nutrition.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
18. Menu Planning.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
19. Food Preparation.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
20. Food Buying and Budgeting.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 6 Almost Always NA
21. Food Storage.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
22. Food Sanitation.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
23. Refers eligible homemakers to other community resources.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

Record Keeping

The Aide:

24. Keeps logs reflecting work involvement with families.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
25. Submits travel vouchers reflecting the work-related miles driven.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
26. Makes entries on Spin-off report throughout the year.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
27. Fails to complete required records/reports.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
28. Completes assignments and required records/reports after their due date.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
29. Makes errors in records/reports.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
30. Submits records/reports to supervisor to document progress of the families.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

Job-Related Development

The Aide:

31. Updates and revises teaching methods to reflect new information and skills.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
32. Becomes involved in additional on-the-job training to improve performance.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
33. Participates in in-service training sessions (i.e. involved in discussions, offers opinions, new ideas, etc...)
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
34. Volunteers for additional responsibilities.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
35. Reads materials which are routed or presented at staff meetings.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
36. Ignores suggestions for work improvement from supervisors and co-workers.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
37. Makes independent decisions but seeks advice when appropriate.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
38. Discusses with the supervisor the progression of homemakers toward graduation or termination.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
39. Manages time/resources to provide education to many families.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
40. Assists in orientation of new Aides and other staff members.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

New Family Recruitment and Volunteer Development

The Aide:

41. Recruits new clients to maintain caseload.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
42. Recruits homemakers from parents of youth in EFNEP 4-H groups.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
43. Contacts all new family referrals.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
44. Keeps Supervisory Aide informed about follow-up on family referrals.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
45. Recruits or works with families which are ineligible for the program.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
46. Recruits families that reflect the varied racial/ethnic groups in the county.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
47. Refers families (youth and adults) to other extension programs.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
48. Promotes EFNEP within the community.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
49. Identifies potential leaders/volunteers.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
50. Recruits volunteers both graduated homemakers and others.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
51. Fails to contact potentially interested volunteers.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
52. Assists in identifying jobs for volunteers.
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

Staff Relations

The Aide:

53. Contributes constructively at staff and other planning sessions (i.e. offers new ideas, shares new information, one can disagree but offers alternatives to consider).
______ Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
54. Disturbs other staff while they are working in the office.
Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA
55. Shares job-related information with other staff members.
Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always NA

Performance Results

56. Number of enrolled program families since last evaluation: ______
57. Number of new program families added since last evaluation: ______
58. Number of families graduated since last evaluation: ______
59. Number of families dropped/terminated (not graduated) since last evaluation: ______
60. Number of visits per month to enrolled families—
Month 1: ______
Month 2: ______
Month 3: ______
61. Number of non-program families worked with since last evaluation: ______
62. Number of homemakers who have improved their food recall since last evaluation: ______
63. Number of homemakers that improved their food behavior since last evaluation: ______
64. Number of homemakers who have improved their "Family Fare" score since last evaluation: ______
65. Number of adult groups: ______
66. Number of youth groups ______
67. Number of new EFNEP/4-H youth groups since last evaluation: ______
68. Number of volunteers involved in EFNEP activities since last evaluation: ______
69. Number of new volunteers since last evaluation: ______
70. Average number of teaching hours per enrolled homemaker: ______
71. Average number of teaching hours per day: ______

I certify that this evaluation was reviewed with me by my supervisor. My signature does not necessarily indicate my concurrence.

______ Employee ______ Date

______ Extension Home Economist ______ Date

______ Supervisory Aide ______ Date

______ Department Administrator ______ Date

______ Director of Personnel/Administration ______ Date

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Revised EFNEP 1-82

Appendix 12
Paraprofessionals in International Work

Throughout the world there is increasing interest in using paraprofessionals to provide services which are acceptable and accessible to the rural poor who often have not been reached by other development programs. In cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Rural Development Committee of the Center for International Studies at Cornell University researched the role of the paraprofessional in rural development. Field studies were conducted in Guatemala, Bolivia, Senegal, Upper Volta, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines.

For research purposes the Cornell team defined paraprofessionals generally as workers (1) with no more than 12 months of pre-service or technical school training; (2) who have direct service contact with rural dwellers; (3) who play a semi-autonomous role in making day-to-day judgments and decisions; (4) who operate as part of an organized private or public sector agency. The typical paraprofessional is likely to be indigenous to the service area and to have no more than a primary school education.[1]

Cornell's extensive literature search which preceded the field work suggested a number of general propositions: (1) development objectives in agricultural and health sectors in terms of communication and adoption of improved practices can be achieved efficiently (measured in unit cost and time required) through the use of paraprofessionals; (2) the effectiveness of a paraprofessional program depends upon the adoption of appropriate program practices regarding selection, training, supervision, and compensation; and (3) the effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness of paraprofessionals will vary directly with their success in encouraging local participation through local organization.

The following are the titles of the overall special series on paraprofessionals:

Paraprofessionals in Rural Development. Milton J. Esman, Royal Colle, Norman Uphoff, Ellen Taylor, with assistance of Forrest Colburn, Douglas Gritzinger, Robert Hall, and Cynthia Moore. 1980, $5.00, PP No. 1

Guatemala's Rural Health Paraprofessional. Forrest D. Colburn. 1981, $3.50, PP No. 2

Women Paraprofessionals in Upper Volta's Rural Development. Ellen Taylor. 1981, $3.50, PP No. 3

Paraprofessionals in Village-Level Development in Sri Lanka: The Sarvodaya Shr Amadama Movement. Cynthia Moore. 1981, $3.50, PP No. 4

The Village Health Worker Approach to Rural Health Care: The Case of Senegal. Robert E. Hall. 1981, $3.50, PP No. 5

They are available from the Center for International Studies Rural Development Committee, 170 Uris Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 14853.

[1]R. Colle, et al., concept paper: Paraprofessional in Rural Development, Ithaca, New York; Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, 1979.

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